

REMARKS

Applicants hereby acknowledge the Office Action mailed on May 24, 2004. Applicants thank the Examiner for consideration of the Amendment filed February 23, 2004, and request re-examination of the present application in view of the following remarks.

Claims 1-4 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of European Patent 0660655 issued to Matsuzoe. The Examiner asserts:

Matsuzoe discloses a transport system for small components, arranged in series comprising a chain having a plurality of chain links (2) having a through opening cavity formed therein having at least 2 walls where one wall is rigid and another wall is resilient (see figure 1), a central web (center of 13) having resilient arms (either ends of 13) laterally extending therefrom and extending from the full height within the cavity. Matsuzoe also discloses the resilient arms having their upper ends being freestanding, the outside rigid wall having a slope (see figure 1).

The Examiner admits Matsuzoe fails to disclose orientating the resilient wall opposite the rigid wall. However, the Examiner believes it would have been obvious "to modify the wall arrangement of Matsuzoe's invention with that of the Applicant's invention, thereby changing the resilient wall opposite to the rigid wall to provide for a range of different sized conveyed electrical components." Moreover, responsive to previous arguments made previously by the Applicants, the Examiner further explained: "it would be obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, to appreciate that modifying Matsuzoe's invention by replacing one of the resilient walls with a rigid wall, would allow for fewer moveable parts and a solid, secure structure to thereby seat and hold in place the electrical components being conveyed." Applicants respectfully disagree.

Applicants believe Matsuzoe does not render claims 1-4 and 18 obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Specifically, Applicants dispute the Examiner's contention that one skilled in the art would modify Matsuzoe's invention by replacing a resilient wall with a rigid wall. However, in order to better clarify the invention and place the claims in condition for allowance, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 18.

Applicants have added language to both claims 1 and 18 to clarify that the transport system described in each claim includes a structure wherein "the resilient wall is adapted to urge the small component against the rigid wall when the cavity accommodates the small component." The specification teaches this feature at page 3, lines 75-77 of the present Application, as filed.

Even if Matsuzoe were modified in the manner suggested by the Examiner, Matsuzoe would still not render claims 1 and 18 obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Matsuzoe teaches a variety of trays with cavities including positive locking. For example, in the trays disclosed in Figures 1-8 of Matsuzoe, rocking plates 13 include locking pawls 16 protruding inwardly into the cavity. As shown in Figure 5, the locking pawls 16 rotate over the top of a tab portion of article B. Similarly, Figure 7 depicts an alternative embodiment wherein locking pawl 16 extends over the top surface of article B in order to retain the article within the cavity.

Figures 9-11 depict another embodiment of resilient walls 13 including locking pawls 16. As shown in Figure 9, the locking pawls 16 extend over the top surface of the article B' in order to retain the article within the cavity. Figure 11 shows the resilient wall pivoting in order to free the article from the locking pawl 16 for removal of the article.

The last embodiment of the trays taught by Matsuzoe is depicted in Figures 12-17. Each of these trays includes a plurality of plate members 7, and each plate member 7 includes a locking pawl 7c. Matsuzoe explains that the locking pawls 7c click over the corner edges of the chip to hold the chip in place. *See* Matsuzoe, column 6, lines 45-48.

Based upon the above, it is apparent that Matsuzoe teaches the retention of the article within the cavity by way of a positive locking system in which locking pawls extend over a portion of the article. The resilient walls do not urge the article in any manner. Accordingly, even if Matsuzoe could be modified in the manner suggested by the Examiner, the resilient walls would not urge the small components toward the rigid wall. The positive locking of the locking pawls taught by Matsuzoe would eliminate the need to have the resilient wall urge the component toward the rigid wall.

Claims 1 and 18 of the present application now require that the resilient wall urge the small component toward the rigid wall. Matsuzoe does not teach this limitation in any

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manner. Accordingly, Matsuzoe does not render either claim 1 or claim 18 obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), and thus, Applicants assert claims 1 and 18 are allowable over the prior art. Moreover, as the remaining claims ultimately depend from claims 1 and 18, Applicants believe all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Thus, Applicants respectfully request passage thereof.

If necessary to effect a timely response, please consider this paper a request for an extension of time, and charge any shortages in fees, or apply any overpayment credits, to Baker & Daniels' Deposit Account No. 02-0387 (72262.90014). However, please do not include the payment of issue fees.

Respectfully submitted,

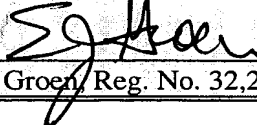


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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on

August 25, 2004

Date



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